

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

- B2
1. (Currently Amended) A die assembly, comprising:
 - a base;
 - a lower, adjustable post having a base-contacting surface that is mounted for linear movement with respect to said base between a first cutting position and a second cutting position, including movement in a first direction;
 - a first force applying mechanism coupled to said base and to said adjustable post to move said adjustable post between said first cutting position and said second cutting position;
 - an upper, impacting post being movable between an impact position proximate to said adjustable post and an elevated, removed position in which said impacting post is displaced away from said impact position and said adjustable post, including being movable in a second direction that is transverse to said first direction; and
 - a second force applying mechanism coupled to said impacting post to move said impacting post between said removed position and said impact position,
 - said first force applying mechanism including a force applying element connected between a first force applying device and said adjustable post, with said force applying device constructed and arranged to move said force applying element against said adjustable post, which moves said adjustable post along said base and between said first and second cutting positions, and said force applying device being configured and arranged to secure said force applying element against movement, which secures said adjustable post from moving from a desired position during cutting, and said impacting post moving along a cutting axis that is fixed relative to said base,
 - wherein said first force applying device is a pressure cylinder that is structured to move said adjustable post between said first and second cutting positions and structured to lock said adjustable post from moving from said desired position during cutting.
 2. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 1, wherein said base has a substantially flat upper surface for supporting said adjustable post.

3. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 1, wherein said adjustable post is slidably coupled to said base.

4. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 2, wherein said base-contacting surface is substantially flat and moves along said upper surface of said base in substantially horizontal directions.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A die assembly according to ~~claim 5~~ claim 1, wherein said pressure cylinder contains nitrogen.

7. (Currently Amended) A die assembly, comprising:
a base;
a lower, adjustable post having a base-contacting surface that is mounted for linear movement with respect to said base between a first cutting position and a second cutting position, including movement in a first direction;
a first force applying mechanism coupled to said base and to said adjustable post to move said adjustable post between said first cutting position and said second cutting position;
an upper, impacting post being movable between an impact position proximate to said adjustable post and an elevated, removed position in which said impacting post is displaced away from said impact position and said adjustable post, including being movable in a second direction that is transverse to said first direction; and
a second force applying mechanism coupled to said impacting post to move said impacting post between said removed position and said impact position,
said first force applying mechanism including a force applying element connected between a first force applying device and said adjustable post, with said force applying device constructed and arranged to move said force applying element against said adjustable post, which moves said adjustable post along said base and between said first and second cutting positions, and said force applying device being configured and arranged to secure said force applying element against movement, which secures said adjustable post from moving from a desired position during cutting, and said impacting post moving along a cutting axis that is fixed relative to said base ~~A die assembly according to claim 1,~~

wherein said adjustable post includes a first side and a second side, which is opposite to said first side, and said first force applying device includes a first pressure cylinder positioned adjacent to said first side of said adjustable post to apply pressure on said first side of said adjustable post and a second pressure cylinder positioned adjacent to said second side of said adjustable post to apply pressure on said second side of said adjustable post.

8. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 1, wherein said second force applying mechanism is supported by said base and positioned above said base.

9. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 1, wherein said second force applying mechanism includes a pressure cylinder.

10. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 1, wherein said first direction is along a first axis and second directions is along a second axis.

11. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 1, wherein said impacting post moves along a fixed, substantially vertical cutting axis.

12. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 1, further comprising:
a first stop attached to said base in a first predetermined position on said base and aligned with said adjustable post to prohibit said adjustable post from moving beyond said first predetermined position.

13. (Currently Amended) A die assembly, comprising:
a base;
a lower, adjustable post having a base-contacting surface that is mounted for linear movement with respect to said base between a first cutting position and a second cutting position, including movement in a first direction;
a first force applying mechanism coupled to said base and to said adjustable post to move said adjustable post between said first cutting position and said second cutting position;
an upper, impacting post being movable between an impact position proximate to said adjustable post and an elevated, removed position in which said impacting post is displaced

away from said impact position and said adjustable post, including being movable in a second direction that is transverse to said first direction;

a second force applying mechanism coupled to said impacting post to move said impacting post between said removed position and said impact position;

said first force applying mechanism including a force applying element connected between a first force applying device and said adjustable post, with said force applying device constructed and arranged to move said force applying element against said adjustable post, which moves said adjustable post along said base and between said first and second cutting positions, and said force applying device being configured and arranged to secure said force applying element against movement, which secures said adjustable post from moving from a desired position during cutting, and said impacting post moving along a cutting axis that is fixed relative to said base;

a first stop attached to said base in a first predetermined position on said base and aligned with said adjustable post to prohibit said adjustable post from moving beyond said first predetermined position; and ~~A die assembly according to claim 12, further comprising:~~

a second stop attached to said base in a second predetermined position on said base and aligned with said adjustable post to prohibit said adjustable post from moving beyond said second predetermined position.

14. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 10, further comprising:
a gib attached to said base and coupled to said adjustable post to permit movement of said adjustable post only along a single axis.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) A die assembly, comprising:
a base;
an adjustable post having a base-contacting surface that is slidably coupled to said base;

B2

a first force applying mechanism coupled to said base and to said adjustable post to move said adjustable post between a first cutting position and a second cutting position;

a second force applying mechanism; and

an impacting post attached to said second force applying mechanism and movable by said second force applying mechanism between an impact position proximate to said adjustable post and a removed position in which said impacting post is displaced away from said impact position and said adjustable post,

said first force applying mechanism including a force applying element connected between a first force applying device and said adjustable post, with said force applying device constructed and arranged to move said force applying element against said adjustable post, which moves said adjustable post along said base and between said first and second cutting positions, and said force applying device being configured and arranged to secure said force applying element against movement, which secures said adjustable post from moving from a desired position during cutting, and said impacting post moving along a cutting axis that is fixed relative to said base,

wherein said first force applying device is a pressure cylinder that is structured to move said adjustable post between said first and second cutting positions and structured to lock said adjustable post from moving from said desired position during cutting.

19. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 18, wherein said base has a substantially flat upper surface for supporting said adjustable post.

20. (Original) A die assembly according to claim 19, wherein said base-contacting surface is substantially flat and moves along said upper surface of said base in substantially horizontal directions.

21. (New) A die assembly according to claim 7, wherein said first force applying device and said first and second pressure cylinders are structured to both move said adjustable post between said first and second cutting positions and lock said adjustable post in said desired position.

22. (New) A die assembly according to claim 13, wherein said adjustable post includes a first side and a second side, which is opposite to said first side, and said first force

applying device includes a first pressure cylinder positioned adjacent to said first side of said adjustable post to apply pressure on said first side of said adjustable post and a second pressure cylinder positioned adjacent to said second side of said adjustable post to apply pressure on said second side of said adjustable post, and

wherein said first force applying device and said first and second pressure cylinders are structured to both move said adjustable post between said first and second cutting positions and lock said adjustable post in said desired position.

Bo concluded